

L'Ecole Internationale Franco-Anglaise Ltd

36 Portland Place, Marylebone, London W1B 1LS

Inspection dates

1–3 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The head of school, senior leaders, and proprietors have ensured that the school has continued to improve since the previous inspection. They have, together with staff, created a caring school which successfully develops pupils' ability to be confident, multilingual citizens.
- Pupils benefit from a stimulating curriculum which develops their knowledge and understanding of the world. Learning is enriched with planned visitors, events and educational visits. These strongly promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- For pupils this vibrant curriculum sparks a strong love of learning. Their excellent attitudes strongly support their good learning across the curriculum.
- Art teaching across the school is a strength. Pupils progressively learn about the great masters and their techniques. Pupils' experimentation with techniques helps them create artwork which is celebrated through regular exhibitions in school.
- Leadership, and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, are good in the early years. Regardless of their home language, children make good progress from their entry at the age of two. They are well prepared to continue learning on entry to Year 1.
- Teachers know the abilities of pupils well, and set work which meets their needs. Pupils are helped to develop a love of reading and this in turn inspires their own writing.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is good. However, some could attain a greater depth in their learning. Teachers do not ensure that pupils develop their ability to explain their mathematical thinking or justify their calculations. The most able pupils are not consistently required to apply learning in more abstract contexts.
- Staff benefit from regular training that is tailored to improve pupils' learning. However, a sharper focus on developing pupils' progress over time will help maximise the impact this training has.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders, managers and proprietors should improve teaching, learning and pupils' outcomes so they are consistently outstanding, by:
 - ensuring that the most able pupils can apply their mathematical learning in more abstract contexts
 - progressively developing the ability of pupils to explain their mathematical thinking and calculations across the school
 - focusing on pupils' progress over time when making checks on teaching and considering the impact of staff development
 - ensuring that staff in the early years capture regular evidence of children's learning in technology, using this information to adjust activities where necessary.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, managers and proprietors have expanded the school successfully since the previous inspection. A pre-school for two-year-olds, a Nursery and a secondary department have all been added to the original primary school. Leaders have ensured that the school's vision is successfully embedded across these new stages of learning. Pupils are helped to become open-minded, respectful of other people's opinions, and able to communicate in more than one language.
- The new early years and secondary leaders have worked with the head of school to develop good links with parents. Nearly all parents are highly satisfied with the work of the school and would recommend it to others. Parents receive helpful information about how to support their children's learning throughout the school.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have strengthened their checks on teaching. These are more regular, and support staff in improving their work with pupils. Regular, in-house and external training builds on both individual and whole-school professional development needs. Consequently, despite its rapid growth, the school has continued to improve since the 2013 inspection. Leaders rightly recognise a need to increase their focus on ensuring that these checks, and subsequent training, are more sharply focused on improving pupils' academic progress over time.
- The school has continued to develop and improve its curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities for pupils. The school carefully balances academic learning with a focus on developing pupils' linguistic, artistic, technological and creative abilities. These opportunities help the school to fulfil effectively their aim of shaping pupils to become global citizens.
- Pupils are helped to develop their understanding of careers through the school's regular visitors. For example, primary pupils spoke with inspectors about their understanding of the British court system following a visit from a high court judge. This enriched their ability to write mystery stories and develop an increased understanding of a career in the legal profession. Secondary pupils benefit from an ongoing impartial careers programme tailored to their needs and interests. This ambitious programme helps to ensure that pupils feel empowered to make decisions about their next stage of education, training or employment, regardless of the country in which they wish to study or work.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils have a clear understanding of the British and French constitutions. They have a progressively sophisticated understanding of the concepts of monarchy and republic. Pupils are taught about the importance of law in a democratic society. Pupils have a particularly strong understanding of culture, developed through their wide reading, visits to the theatre, and appreciation of classical and modern music styles, including jazz.
- Middle leaders play an important role in supporting the head of school and the secondary school headteacher. Their roles in leading the curriculum, assessment and early years have played an important part in helping to improve the school while expanding quickly. Together with senior leaders, they have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

- Leaders and proprietors have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.

Governance

- The board of directors has an accurate and clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Two members of the board work directly in the school, but others help provide external challenge and oversight. Consequently, the board provides effective challenge, ensuring that investments in money, time and resources are focused on improving the school's improvement priorities.
- The directors ensure that the well-being and safety of pupils are priorities. Their challenge has helped leaders focus on implementing policies and procedures to meet the needs of pupils at this school. The board makes effective use of an external consultant to consider the school's effectiveness and developmental needs. Directors use the reports from this adviser to help them challenge senior leaders and maintain school improvement.
- The board is comprised of individuals with a range of skills and expertise. Together they ensure that pupils are prepared well for their next stage of education, training or employment. Pupils leave the school able to communicate in English and French, with many being multilingual. Consequently, directors have ensured the school is effectively fulfilling a key aim for their school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders implement up-to-date training for safeguarding, including the 'Prevent' duty. Staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities, and regularly refresh their knowledge of the signs of neglect, and child protection issues, such as female genital mutilation and children missing in education.
- Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the school's policies and procedures. Regular staff meetings allow staff to identify concerns early and seek support to avoid issues escalating. Paperwork is organised and shared appropriately, both internally and with other agencies.
- Leaders have ensured that the school community understands local risks, for example those that arise from being in the heart of central London. Lockdown procedures are well practised, and staff and pupils understand how to stay safe in a range of scenarios.
- Leaders ensure that safer recruitment processes are followed effectively. The school employs many staff from France, Canada and other countries. Criminal record checks are made in foreign countries when necessary, and qualifications are explored thoroughly. Leaders strive to maintain the highest standards of safeguarding by exploring and, where appropriate, implementing learning points from serious case reviews.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good. Pupils are taught by a range of staff with specialist linguistic and subject knowledge. Consequently, pupils become confident learners with strong communication skills. They make good progress in mathematics and in some classes and year groups progress is stronger because of outstanding teaching.

- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress as tasks stimulate their interest and staff overcome potential barriers to learning. Pupils learning English or French as an additional language make good progress because staff are confident in helping them learn new vocabulary and making strides in their acquisition of phonics and reading.
- Teachers use the school's stimulating curriculum to engage pupils' curiosity and interest in learning. For example, at the time of the inspection pupils had been preparing for a visit to Toulouse in France. They had been corresponding with French pupils and creating video materials, developing their writing for voice-overs and use of information and communications technology. Demonstrating the progressive development of pupils' knowledge and skills, older pupils developed this at a higher level during a recent newsroom experience with professional journalists from France.
- Art and drama teaching are strengths across the school. Pupils develop their knowledge and use of skills from the early years to the time they leave school. Their artwork becomes sophisticated, and pupils are helped to find their own style. Exhibiting artwork and performing drama allow pupils to celebrate their achievements, and this also enhances their cultural and spiritual development over time.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful. Pupils' own self-discipline and respect for learning plays a large part in their academic progress throughout the school.
- The teaching of mathematics ensures that pupils make good progress, particularly in their ability to calculate and solve problems. However, pupils are not required to develop their ability to explain their mathematical thinking, particularly in writing. Leaders accept that this important skill is even more important, given the variety of languages pupils learn, and is key to ensuring strong progress for all pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' well-being is at the heart of the school's work. Careful induction processes are in place, helping pupils adjust to the school over time, as well as to life in London and, more broadly, the United Kingdom. Consequently, pupils have a strong understanding of London, its people, and its history and culture. They have a clear and age-appropriate understanding of how to stay safe, for example when travelling in the capital and using electronic devices.
- Pupils feel safe at school. They understand the range of circumstances, including online, that constitutes bullying, and know how to resolve it should it occur. Inspectors spoke to a wide range of pupils; all were adamant that bullying does not occur at school. They were equally certain that should it occur staff would be quick to resolve it.
- The curriculum helps pupils to develop a deep knowledge of healthy living, threading learning through a variety of topics, including hygiene, nutrition, physical education, and science, particularly highlighting the importance of exercise.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Leaders and staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour in classrooms and conduct around school. Pupils are highly respectful of each other and display exemplary attitudes to their learning. They display great maturity and diligence in taking responsibility, both in class and in their roles around school, for example, as councillors, or when helping younger pupils.
- Adults are vigilant, and respond swiftly to any issues that arise. Pupils actively listen to each other and try to resolve their occasional quarrels. Adult support is always available, and solutions are found quickly. Consequently, pupils are happy at school, and attendance has been improving strongly since the last inspection.
- Pupils are punctual, show commitment, and want to learn. They read widely and are keen to research through non-fiction reading in their own time. This commitment to their development as learners makes a strong contribution to their progress across the curriculum.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils are taught well across the school. This is strongest in the primary phase, particularly in Years 2, 5 and 6. However, teaching has been improving in quality since the previous inspection. Pupils make particularly strong progress in art and drama across the school.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, those from different minority ethnic backgrounds, or who speak English or French as an additional language make the same good progress as their peers across the curriculum. This is due to the stimulating lessons, and the help pupils receive to overcome barriers to their learning. Pupils' work is of a high academic standard across a wide range of subjects. Consequently, regardless of their background, learning needs or native language, pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their learning, employment or training.
- Pupils read well. They access a wide range of high-quality texts. Effective teaching of phonics helps pupils get off to a good start in the early years. This firm basis is developed as pupils progress through the school. Lessons help expose pupils to high-quality texts, including those of William Shakespeare. For example, Year 6 were reading 'Twelfth night' during the inspection. Older pupils read willingly and for their own enjoyment. Consequently, the school is effective in helping to ensure that pupils see themselves as readers in the languages they can speak.
- Pupils attain well in technology. They make effective use of tablets to share their learning and record their work. They develop their ability to use technology for different purposes, for example to write coding for computer programs.
- Pupils' progress is good in mathematics. Leaders have already begun work to ensure that pupils, particularly the most able, can apply their learning in more abstract contexts. Leaders had recognised that this was an important development area for the school, but this work was still at an early stage and it was too soon to see an impact of their actions.

- The secondary school opened in 2016. There are no pupils currently in the sixth form. The school is yet to have its first IGCSE results. The first, very small cohort, is making good progress, and pupils across the secondary phase are attaining well, for example, in the French Diplôme nationale du Brevet examination. Pupils are being helped to consider their options for British and international universities, for example in France, Canada and the United States of America.

Early years provision

Good

- Children settle quickly to school life. A caring and nurturing environment ensures that children grow in confidence. Where appropriate, this helps children grow in confidence when learning French or English as a non-native language.
- Children join the early years with a range of skills that are broadly typical for their age. A small minority of pupils begin with skills higher than those typical for their age. Teachers engage children using their interests to inspire learning. A wide range of additional activities enhances children's physical and creative development, for example ballet and yoga classes staffed by specialists. Consequently, pupils make good progress in their early years curriculum and are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Children work well together from entry at the age of two. They are helped to develop their concentration skills and behave impeccably. These skills play a key role in their good academic progress in the early years and beyond.
- Staff involve parents in their children's education. Induction arrangements help settle children quickly, regardless of when they begin the early years. Staff draw on information from parents to shape learning which meets children's needs. Therefore, children make good progress regardless of their starting points in English or French.
- Safeguarding policies and practice meet all the independent school standards and statutory requirements for the early years.
- Leadership of the early years is good. The early years leader understands the strengths and weaknesses that exist in the school's current work. This is because she works actively with senior leaders to check on the progress of children from entry through to Reception classes. Consequently, leaders are aware that the school needs to evidence children's learning in technology better across the early years. Leaders are aware this is necessary to ensure that teachers can set, adapt and refine activities so children achieve their full potential in this area of early years learning.

School details

Unique reference number	139239
DfE registration number	213/6000
Inspection number	10020730

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	297
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Ecole Internationale Franco-Anglaise Ltd
Chair	Bassam Shlewet
Headteacher	Sabine Dehon
Annual fees (day pupils)	£18,150–£22,500
Telephone number	020 7637 5351
Website	www.ecole-ifa.com
Email address	spd@ecole-ifa.com
Date of previous inspection	1–3 October 2013

Information about this school

- L'Ecole Internationale Franco-Anglaise Ltd is a co-educational, bilingual independent day school founded in 2013. It is registered for up to 330 pupils aged from two to 18 years. There were no students in the sixth form at the time of the inspection and only three pupils in key stage 4. There were 35 children attending the provision for two-year-olds and the Nursery for three- and four-year olds.
- The school is based across two buildings in the London Borough of Westminster. The early years and classes up to Year 3 are housed in Portland Place. From Year 5, pupils are educated in a building on Duchess Street, which is near the school's main site.

- The school provides a bilingual curriculum in English and French, based on the French national curriculum. The school aims to 'develop pupils' independent judgement, help them be respectful of others, understand the importance of history and have an open-minded view of the world through the mastery of two different languages'.
- The school has arrangements to use a local park and sports centre for physical education and recreational activities. The school provides a range of after-school clubs.
- Most pupils are of White British or White European heritage. All speak English as an additional language, though only a small number are at an early stage of acquiring the standard of language typical for their age.
- The school is governed by a board of directors which includes the head of school and the head of administration, a co-founder. The head of school has operational responsibility for the whole school and is a co-founder. The head of school leaves her post in August 2018, but will retain her position as a director. A new head of school has been appointed.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Meetings were held with the chair of the board of directors, the headteacher, the head of administration, members of staff, the school's external consultant and a wide range of pupils from all year groups.
- Inspectors observed learning in all year groups, and some classes were visited jointly with senior or middle leaders. Work in pupils' books, folders, sketchbooks and tablets was reviewed during visits to classes and in meetings.
- Inspectors heard pupils read, and talked to pupils about life in the school and their learning.
- Inspectors took account of the 137 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 35 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Storrie, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Clementina Aina	Ofsted Inspector
Neil Harvey	Ofsted Inspector

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